

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

This matter had previously come before the Council, which at its one hundredth session, and at the request of the Assembly, had set up a Committee to consider the structure and functions of the Economic and Financial Organizations of the League, more particularly with a view of extending the basis of international co-operation in the economic and financial spheres and of co-ordinating the work entrusted to the organization. The Committee met early this month and presented a report, which is Document C. 169, 1938, II, B. The report is of value not only because of its recommendations, but also because of its review of the structure and functions of the organization. The desirability of finding ways and means of inducing some non-member States who will have nothing to do with the League politically to take part in its economic and financial work was very apparent to those examining the various questions, but the Committee has preferred to make no recommendation under this heading, but to leave the solution to await events. The report clearly shows the development of the organization, and the changes which have taken place in its work in recent years due to changes in world conditions. Such changes imply adaptation of the organization if its work is to be carried through with complete success, and it was on the question of such adaptation that the Committee concentrated, devoting Sections 5 and 6 of the report thereto.

First of all, the Committee stressed the necessity that the members of the Economic and Financial Committees should be in close touch with the handling in their countries of matters coming under the purview of the Committees. In the second place, the Committee felt the need for a single co-ordinating authority with power of initiating discussions, and it proposed to set up this co-ordinating authority in the persons of the two Rapporteurs to the Council on Economic and Financial Questions, representatives of the Economic and Financial Committees, and the Presidents of other standing committees of the organization. These persons would meet as occasion arose, and would have the co-operation of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization and of a representative of the Transit Organization. The Committee also made suggestions as to the allocation of work amongst the Committees of the Assembly. It thought that one Committee (the Second) should be concerned solely with financial, economic, and transit questions. The Committee also suggested a rearrangement of days of meeting, so that principal delegates could attend meetings of both the Second Committee and the Sixth Committee, which latter is concerned with the examination of political questions. Further suggestions as to contact between the Economic and Financial Organization and the Assembly and as to the part to be played by the Secretariat were made by the Committee, which stated that it had been influenced by the consideration that the League derived most of its value from the opportunity it afforded for the exchange of ideas and experience. With that section of the Assembly's resolution regarding the co-ordination of work the Committee did not deal, preferring to leave it to the Co-ordinating Committee, the creation of which it suggested. The committee's recommendations were accepted by the Council, on the proposition of the Rapporteurs, the representatives of France, Poland, and Sweden, and the Council passed the following resolution (see Document C. 180, 1938):—

“The Council—

“Having examined the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the structure and functions of the Economic and Financial Organization of the League of Nations—

“(1) Approves the proposal contained in the report under consideration for the appointment of a Co-ordination Committee, and instructs the Secretary-General to send out the necessary invitations.

“(2) Instructs the Secretary-General to invite the Right Hon. S. M. Bruce, High Commissioner for Australia in London, to serve as Chairman of this Committee and to determine what action, if any, should be taken in execution of that report before the next ordinary session of the Assembly, more particularly for the purpose of carrying out the decisions of the last Assembly.

“(3) Transmits the Report on the Structure and Functions of the Economic and Financial Organization to the Assembly.”

At the final public meeting of the Council held on the afternoon of the 14th May the following items were included in the agenda and considered:—

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL QUESTIONS: REPORT ON THE WORK OF ITS SECOND SESSION.

The report of the Advisory Committee is Document C. 147, M. 88, 1938, IV. It covers a number of matters relating principally to the welfare of women and children, and as it will be considered by the Fifth Committee of the Assembly when that body meets in September next I will reserve comment for my report on the Assembly. It was introduced to the Council under cover of a commentary by the Rapporteur, the representative of Peru (see Document C. 179, 1938, IV), and the Council accepted its Rapporteur's recommendations, which were:—

(1) To invite the following organizations to be Corresponding Members of the Advisory Committee on Social Questions—

International Committee of Schools for Social Service:

International Co-operative Women's Guild:

Catholic International Union for Social Service:

Permanent Committee of the International Conference on Social Work:

Associated Countrywomen of the World:

International Association of Children's Court Judges.